

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5479

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, HU, TH, US

SUBJ: ANTI-THAI PRESS CAMPAIGN

1. FOR PAST WEEK HUNGARIAN NEWS MEDIA HAVE CARRIED HIGHLY CRITICAL ARTICLES ABOUT THAI GOVERNMENT "REPRESSION" AND ALLEGED U.S. MILITARY ACTIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. FIRST TO APPEAR WAS MARCH 7 ARTICLE ON FRONT PAGE OF HSWP DAILY NEPSZABADSAG STATING THAT "U.S.-MADE F-111 FIGHTER BOMBERS" HAD CARRIED OUT BOMBING RAIDS AGAINST CAMBODIA. FEW DAYS LATER WORDS "U.S.-MADE" DISAPPEARED FROM ARTICLES AND REPORTS CHARGED THAT AMERICAN WAR PLANES BOMBED SIEM REAP PROVINCE OF CAMBODIA.

2. ALSO ON MARCH 7, NEPSZABADSAG PUBLISHED ARTICLE ENTITLED "THAILAND CONTINUES TO BE IN SHADOW OF U.S.", ALLEGING THAT F-111'S ARE CARRYING OUT BOMBING RAIDS FROM THAILAND AND THAT BANGKOK GOVERNMENT, " WHICH LOYALLY SERVED MURDEROUS INDOCHINESE WAR OF U.S., IS STILL CARRYING OUT ITS EARLIER POLICY". NEPSZABADSAG SAID THAT

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BANGKOK HAD CONSIDERED MOVING CLOSER TOWARD PEKING,

PHON PENH AND EUROPEAN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES BUT HAS NOW DECIDED TO "REMAIN UNDER U.S. PROTECTION". ARTICLE CONTAINS LONG DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGED "RIGHTIST TERRORIST" GROUPS OPERATING IN THAILAND AND CITES THIS AS PROOF THAT MILITARY IS TIRED OF DEMOCRACY AND WANTS TO RETURN TO POWER. PARTICULARLY INTRIGUING WAS STATEMENT THAT "GEOGRAPHICALLY, THAILAND IS ORGANIC PART OF INDOCHINA AND INTEREST OF THAT COUNTRY REQUIRES IT TO GET ALONG WITH ITS NEIGHBORS".

3. GOVERNMENT DAILY MAGYAR HIRLAP CARRIED EDITORIAL MARCH 9 BY FOREIGN EDITOR LASZLO BOGOS ENTITLED "THAILAND SERVING WASHINGTON". EDITORIAL CHARGES THAT "REPEATED PROVOCATIONS AGAINST LAOS AND CAMBODIA FROM THAI TERRITORY SHOWS THAT MOST REACTIONARY CIRCLES OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM HAVE NOT LEARNED ANYTHING FROM INDOCHINESE DEFEAT OF 1975 AND THAT THEY DO EVERYTHING TO DISTURB CONSTRUCTIVE WORK OF INDOCHINESE PEOPLE ON ROAD TO SOCIALIST DEVELOPMENT". ACCORDING TO BOGOS, "AMERICAN IMPERIALISTS", USING EXTREME RIGHT-WING FORCES, ARE ATTEMPTING TO DEVIDE "INDOCHINESE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT". HE ALLEGES THAT THAI PROVOCATIONS ARE RESULT OF AMERICAN PRESSURE AND ILLUSTRATION OF U.S. ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN ITS MILITARY PERSONNEL IN AREA.

4. ON MARCH 10 HUNGARIAN NEWS AGENCY (MTI) ARTICLES APPEARED IN ALL BUDAPEST NEWSPAPERS WITH TITLE "THAILAND: GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED ASSASSINATION WAVE". ARTICLE SAYS THAT "WHOLE SERIES OF POLITICAL MURDERS IN RECENTMONTHS BY ULTAR-RIGHT ORGANIZATIONS ENJOYING GOVERNMENT AND ARMY SUPPORT HAVE TURNED THAILAND INTO AN INFERNO". MTI CLAIMS THAT RIGHTIST TERRORISTS CANNOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS WHEN SELECTING THEIR VICTIMS AND WHILE "ENJOYING OFFICIAL SUPPORT ARE SLAUGHTERING THEIR OPPONENTS WITH MOTTO THAT THEY MUST 'PROTECT NATION, RELIGIONS, AND MONARCHY' AGAINST LEFTISTS".

5. SUDDEN VITRIOLIC ATTACKS AGAINST THAILAND AND U.S. POLICY TOWARD THAT COUNTRY BEGAN IMMEDIATELY AFTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAMBODIAN CHARGES OF U.S. BOMBING RAIDS. IN RECENT YEARS THAILAND HAS NOT BEEN STRONG TARGET OF OFFICIAL ATTACKS AND PRESS CAMPAIGN IS SURPRISING IN LIGHT OF RELATIVELY RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN BUDAIQST AND BANGKOK.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT DTFAPST IS FOLLOWING GENERAL WARSAW PACT POLICY LINE ON THAILAND

SINCE MAGYARS HAVE NO COMPELLING NEED TO FISH IN
SOUTHEAST ASIAN WATERS.
MCAULIFFE

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